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The
Blossom Trail

By LILIAN LEVERIDGE



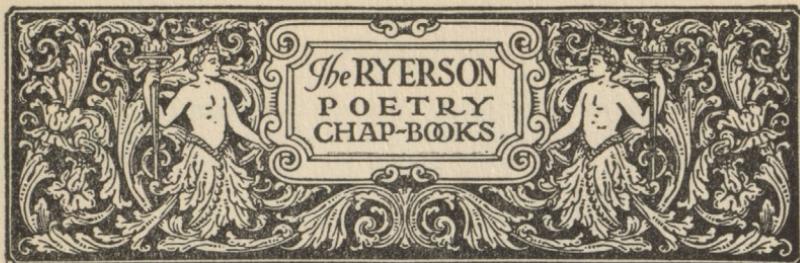
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The Blossom Trail

By Lilian Leveridge



THE BLOSSOM TRAIL

THERE are flowers to-day in the valleys blowing,
 Green ferns are growing beside the rills;
 There is mingled music of waters falling
 And wild birds calling across the hills.
 'Tis love that speaks in a thousand voices;
 All earth rejoices, all nature thrills.

Let us rest awhile from our toils and listen,
 While cool dews glisten on leaf and blade.
 With gladness then let us rise and follow,
 Through mossy hollow and sunny glade,
 The blossom trail of the Spring, dream-haunted,
 With hearts undaunted and unafraid.

The breath of spring is with rare balms laden,
 Perfumes made in her secret still—
 Shy arbutus, dogwood and cherry,
 Bilberry, violet, daffodil.
 The wild winds fling them in sportive sally
 Down the valley and over the hill.

There is life reborn in each green blade springing,
Each wood-bird singing his passioned lay
To the brooding mate of his long love-questing
And happy nesting. And so, to-day
The green-gold world is the haunt of lovers,
Where each discovers life's old glad way.

Then haste, dear heart! For why do we tarry?
And why do we carry our griefs and cares?
Let us up and away! Let us drop our burden,
And claim the guerdon of all the years!
For the glad, sweet earnest of love immortal
At spring's green portal waits unawares.



TO MARJORIE PICKTHALL

YOU left us when the April buds were blowing
Upon the greening hills,
When little wandering airs went softly winging,
And down a thousand wakening vales came ringing
The music of the rills.

But on the blossoming hills you left your footprints;
And through the vales of spring
Your little songs go singing, singing ever,
All spirit-sweet and lovely, ceasing never
Their pure, clear carolling.

Where wander now your feet all golden-sandalled?
Upon what heights afar
Peals out your April song, sublime, immortal—
You who so early gained the pearly portal
Beyond the twilight star?

May we not catch a whisper of its cadence
Adrift upon the night—
An angel aria to inspire and thrill us,
A lingering, love-born ecstasy to fill us
With your divine delight?

You left us when the April buds were blowing,
Yet you are ours to-day;
For wistful echoes of your dulcet singing,
In deathless music down the valleys ringing,
Can never pass away.

* * *

THE UNFORGOTTEN

(In Memory of Bliss Carman)

A SENSE of loss is in the valleys,
Of loneliness upon the hills.
A lily in its scented chalice
A sacramental dew distils,
And Nature, in the twilight kneeling,
Lifts the sweet token to her lips,
No far light viewing, only feeling
Her world of beauty in eclipse.

The sylvan choristers returning
Shall woo him in each pensive strain,
But oh! not all their music's yearning
Will call their Lover back again.
The winds, bereaved, shall seek unresting
Their own beloved Vagabond,
But never in their world-wide questing
Will he to one wild note respond.

Long as there dawns a blue-gold morning
When Nature wakes refreshed from sleep,
All sordidness and shadow scorning,
Seeking but light and joy to keep;
Long as there burns a glowing ember
Of sunset's iridescent flame,
Earth's eyes shall kindle and remember
The fadeless glory of his fame.

Long as young April trails her flowers
Through woodland paths and ferny dells,
Linger in the silver showers
To ring her fairy wedding bells;
Long as the Junetide meadows blossom,
And Autumn spreads her cloth-of-gold,
The world of beauty in its bosom
His image tenderly shall hold.

LITTLE CITY GARDENS

O LITTLE city gardens, I love your smiling grace!
You brighten up the shadows of many a dreary place.
How dull would be the dwellings, how desolate the street,
Without your blooming beauty, your fragrance, faint and sweet!

A flash of golden tulips, poppies that beam and burn;
A bed of blue forget-me-not, a cool retreat of fern;
A plot of pinks or pansies, a lily or a rose;
A lilac or syringa to veil the garden-close.

And some have walks and bowers to lure our loitering feet,
And some are very tiny, yet always fair and sweet.
They greet us in the morning as we hurry on our way,
With messages of gladness and courage for the day.

They say that rest and recompense will all our toils reward
In the everlasting beauty of the gardens of the Lord.
O little city gardens, tokens of love divine!
You lift my thoughts to Paradise, your native land, and mine.



AN ONTARIO GARDEN

IN sight of the sparkling tide of Ontario's inland sea,
Glorious, billowy, wind-swept, wide, and blue as blue can be,
We found at the lovely end of a breezy, winding way,
A beautiful garden, a smile, a friend, and a dream for a darker day.

We left our griefs at the gate, for joy is the password here;
Where laughing poppies beckon and wait you enter without a fear.

They troop down the garden walk to greet you on either hand;
They smile and curtsy, and almost talk. You know that they understand.

Alyssum's sweetness and snow, Veronica's feathery plumes,
Rugged Zinnia's crimson glow, Carnation's rare perfumes;
Clematis, misty white, Delphinium's stately grace,—
What soft enchantment, what dear delight, they have woven about the place!

Flowers loved long and well in days and ways of old—
Pink and Pansy and Pimpernel, Marguerite, Marigold;
Flowers that are strange and new, yet no less fairly fair,
Nursed by the sunshine, the dusk, the dew, greet us everywhere.

While in the orchard trees orioles pipe and call,
The humming-birds and the honey-bees make this their port of
call.

Sailing the sunny air, how busily they embark
Their fragrant cargoes of nectar rare, from dawn till the dewy
dark!

Over a trellis high the roses ramble and roam.
Do they dream, perchance, that the sapphire sky up there is
their native home?

'Twas here that we met at last, friend with friends once more.
Under the rosy wreath we passed and entered the open door.

O here is a home indeed! For beauty is all around,
Peace for the tired soul's secret need, and sweetness of scent and
sound;
Sunshine in every room, windows wide to the light,
With never a timorous ghost of gloom entering day or night.

The stars bright vigil keep, and the dark is a grateful balm,
And sweet, O sweet, is the gift of sleep, and welcome the hours
of calm,
O, we have kissed the cross, have drained the bitter cup
Of pain and passion and grief and loss; but love has filled it up.

A gleam of the sparkling tide of Ontario's inland sea,
Glorious, billowy, wind-swept, wide, and blue as blue can be;
And still at the lovely end of a breezy, winding way,
A beautiful garden, a smile, a friend, we find in our dreams
to-day.

GARDEN GOSSIP

THE Hollyhocks by the wall are telling
A secret, thrilling and sweet, I know—
A rare romance that is all-compelling—
To the frivolous, gossiping Golden Glow.

Long were they kept by the wall asunder,
The Golden Glow and the Hollyhocks,
While each gazed up with a wordless wonder
To the fields of blue with their soft cloud flocks.

Only the winds and the brown bees brought them
News of their neighbors across the way.
Many and long were the tales thus taught them,
But now they gossip from day to day.

For Rosy-Face is a tall, fair maiden,
And Goldilocks peeps over the wall;
And the hours with laughter and love are laden,
For there isn't a barrier left at all.

O that we, too, might lean and listen
Here for an hour while the winds are low,
Till our hearts should burn and our glad eyes glisten
With the wild and wonderful things they know!



A GARDEN OF LOVE

MOTHER, if my love for you
Could express itself in flowers,
Were each prayer a shower of dew
In the morn and evening hours,
You would walk in blossomed ways,
Fair and fragrant, all your days.

Blooms that clothed the vales and hills
In the springtides long ago—
Crocuses and daffodils,
Hawthorn, lilies, white as snow,
Primroses and cuckoo flowers
You would find within your bowers.

Pearly daisies, pink and white,
Marigolds and meadow rue,
All would bloom for your delight.
Here would wait to welcome you
Every flower that loved the May
In the homeland far away.

Flowers that on an alien shore
Made your homesick heart grow glad,
Till you loved it more and more,
Found the sweetness in the sad—
Blowing by the northern streams,
Do they greet you still in dreams?

Trilliums that starred the dells,
Mayflowers, delicate and frail,
Twin-flowers' rosy, perfumed bells,
Columbines o'er hill and vale,
Violets yellow, purple, white—
Countless well-springs of delight!

You, who loved all lovely things,
Taught my heart to love them, too.
Essences of all the springs
That my happy childhood knew,
Spirit-sweet, invisible,
Linger all about you still.

Take this little wreath of verse,
With the blossoms that I send—
Dearest in God's universe,
Best of sweethearts, truest friend!
Fairest flowers may fade, but never
Love that lives and blooms for ever.



THE OLD GARDEN

IT is sweet, O sweet, in the old home garden,
With lush green grasses and riot of bloom:
Pinks and pansies, clover and roses—
Yellow and crimson and pearl-white roses—
Chalices brimming with rich perfume,
Tilted and tost by the winds that wander
Up from the lake and over the hills.
Prodigal winds, how they love to squander
The rarest essences summer distils!

But oh, how strangely still is the garden!
Only the birds, singing all day long
In wild abandon of glad elation,
Redeem from silence and desolation
The quiet haunts with their floods of song.
Up in the elm is an oriole swinging,
And low in the lilacs a little brown wren,
Catbird, bluebird, and robin—all singing . . .
What do they know of the sorrows of men?

Larkspurs lean on the wind and listen,
And I, too, listen—but all in vain—
For the slow, soft tread of a foot that falls not,
The tender tones of a voice that calls not
Out of the silence ever again.
But birds and blossoms are true evangelists
Of deathless love, which is all their theme;
And almost I vision the viewless angels,
Singing symphonies through my dream.



FRIENDSHIP

I WANDER through the garden of my heart
At eve when quiet stars above me bend,
Seeking a flower, a flower to speak for me,
In language chaste, the dear, sweet word of "Friend."

A spray of Ivy let me cull for truth
Unshaken 'mid the tempests of the years;
And Marigolds for sunny smiles that shed
A blessed gleam of gladness on our tears.

For thoughts that bridge all gulfs of time or space
Bloom Pansies, faintly fragrant, fresh with dew;
For constancy, the sweet Forget-me-not;
For loving loyalty, the Heather blue.

Here's lowly Heartsease for the perfect trust
Unmoved through good report or ill; and there,
Exhaling subtle perfumes night and morn,
Are lilies, angel-pure, for peace and prayer.

For loving-kindness, Peonies aglow;
For hope the Morning-glory, bright and glad;
And Violets, their sweet eyes dim with tears,
For sympathy in shadowed hours and sad.

These all are beautiful; yet still I seek
One bloom in which all finest perfumes blend,
A blossom that shall speak one word for me
With blessed meaning fraught—the sweet word, "Friend."

At last! Where quiet light is soft and clear—
The light of thought—a perfect blossom blows;
For truth and love and peace, and all the rest,
Are hidden in the heart of one White Rose.



SWEETBRIAR

I FOUND a tiny wilding
Among my garden flowers,
A seedling rose with scented leaves
Impearled with summer showers.

I placed it in my window,
Where now it lives and grows,
As much at home, as well content
As any flower that blows.

It neighbors with begonias,
Geraniums and such.
To me 'tis dearer than the rest,
Although I love them much.

And why? The subtle perfume
Exhaled from hour to hour
Is like a breath of far-off fields,
With youth in perfect flower.

New fragrances may greet me
Along life's sunny track,
But none so magical and rare
As those that call me back

To June days full of sunshine
And freedom on the hills,
Where I companioned with the birds
And blossoms by the rills.

Old scents, old songs, old friendships,
Old loves, old dreams it knows.
And that is why 'tis passing dear,
My wilding briar rose.



NICOTIANA

YOU stand so still in the moonlight,
As pure as an angel's prayer;
There's never a tall, proud lily
More daintily robed and fair:

For you are the bride of the twilight,
The lover of moon and star.
As they pass in the blue above you
Do you see and know them afar?

O that I knew your secret
Of life—what it means to you,
And what is the subtle pleasure
You drink in the dusk and dew!

What is your breath of fragrance?
A ballad hauntingly rare?
A lyric delicate, lovely,
Adrift on the viewless air?

Do you sense my joy in your sweetness
Through the hours that are dark and sad?
When my spirit has reached full stature,
Like you I shall bloom and be glad.

BEAUTY

BEAUTY, I have dreamed of thee
In the night upon my bed.
Shades and mists that round me rolled
Thy enchantment turned to gold.
Glad and free, I followed far
Where the beckoning glory led.

Beauty, I have longed and prayed,
Yearningly, with fervent heart,
For thy joy to banish fears
And the bitterness of tears.
In the dance of daffodils
Doubts and phantoms have no part.

Beauty, I have toiled to build
For thy wings a resting-place.
Come where love has made thee room,
Bid my garden bud and bloom.
Beauty, thou art one with God;
Come and lend my soul thy grace.



THE CRY OF THE FLOWERS

LOVE us, save us!" cry the wildwood flowers;
Gentle folk we are, and frail and shy.
Year by year we fall and fade and perish.
Reach us hands of rescue lest we die!

"We are haunters of the quiet places.
Where the forest shades are cool and deep,
By the dew-pool and the rippling river,
There our tryst with sun and stars we keep.

"Up and down the sunny slopes we wander,
Up the hills and over, dancing light;
Laughing in the wide and open spaces,
Hiding in the valleys out of sight.

"Scenting all the winds with subtle fragrance,
Beautifying many a secret spot,
We would keep our own appointed places,
By the thoughtless crowds ignored, forgot.

"Know they not that when we perish passes
From the earth a glory, a delight?
Who shall re-create our vanished faces,
Who recall our beauty pure and bright?

"You who love us, give us your protection;
Find us sanctuary from our foes.
Scatter wide our seed and tell our story,
Till the world our lovely mission knows.

"You shall be a thousandfold rewarded
When you see the smiling of our face.
Here and in the summer-sweet Hereafter,
Love for love we give, and grace for grace."



THE LADY'S SLIPPER

T'WAS from the window of a car I glimpsed its golden bloom,
And suddenly the heavy air seemed filled with faint perfume,
A woodsy fragrance, wild and sweet, of green and growing things—
And I was caught and borne afar on memory's magic wings.

Deep in the springy turf I sank beside a crystal pool.
What luxury to burning feet, that mossy carpet cool!
A little wind that wandered by my lips and brow caressed,
All winsomely inviting me to stay awhile and rest.

So here beside the pool of dream I stayed, and quite forgot
The world where men go hurrying by on highways hard and hot.
Here toil and haste are all unknown; the hours are velvet-shod,
And gladsomely and restfully all pathways lead to God.

The airs that all around me breathe, how soft and sweet and still!
How clear the notes that fitfully come floating down the hill!
The maker of that melody, I knew him long ago,
His rosy breast, his song of love, a full heart's overflow.

He sings my senses wide awake. With gladdened eyes I see
A yellow Lady's Slipper stand alone beneath a tree.
Its chalice holds the prisoned light of sunbeams manifold,
While shadows cool and dim and deep its emerald leaves enfold.

Discovery of rare delight! the spirit of the wild,
Its magic and its mystery, are in that forest child.
It glorifies the solitude—this princess of the bower—
And all the charm of all the dell is centred in one flower.

Was such thy home, O flower abloom beside the dusty way,
Where clanging iron wheels go by unresting night and day?
And dost thou long for that far spot, so cool and green and still,
Where night and morn the songs of birds come floating down
the hill?

O wildwood blossom, pine no more for green hours velvet-shod!
This teeming world of toiling men is very dear to God.
'Twas love that called thee from thy bower in sylvan fastness
dim,
To bless a thousand world-worn hearts and lift them up to Him.



WHITE WINGS

LITTLE white butterfly, floating so high
Over the roofs so brown,
What do you here in the heavy air
Of this murky, mercantile town?

Here is no loveliness, here are no sweets,
Blossoms nor perfume nor dew,
To tempt the wing of a delicate thing,
A beautiful being like you.

Say, were you sent by the Infinite Love,
Sent from the starry height,
To a homesick heart in the clamorous mart,
With a message of love and light? . . .

"Dim and brief are the ways of grief,
But the blue is a boundless vast.
The soul's white wings are tireless things,
And soon are the shadows past."

ON LUPINE HILL

ONCE the Angel of the Summer
Sat him down to rest and dream
In a far Acadian meadow
By Chebogue's clear, winding stream;
And he cried with waking laughter,
"I will make my dream come true—
With the lovely lupine blossoms
I will paint yon hills in blue."

So he painted and he painted
With a lavish brush and free,
And as bluer bloomed the hillside,
Deeper grew his ecstasy.
"Tis Elysium!" he murmured;
"Here shall angel children play.
Here shall fairies, shod in silver,
Dance the moonlit hours away."

O the glory of the lupine
In the splendor of the morn,
When in sapphire clouds the blossoms
Greet the glad day newly born!
For their dews are my baptism,
And their pureness is my prayer.
On the hill waits Love transfigured—
It is good to worship here.

O the world's a vast, fair palace
In the noontide's golden glow—
Pure, ethereal blue above us,
Tender, living blue below,
Soft blue mist-veils in the hill-gaps.
Earth to-day in heaven's embrace,
Through the glory of the lupine,
Learns the beauty of God's face.

There's a glory on the river
When the sunset lights the west,
Color harmonies down drifting
From the Islands of the Blest;
But this hill's wild, breathing beauty
Lends my soul a robe of grace.
Love is walking in the lupine,
And I meet him face to face.

O the moon is on the water,
And its silver ripples gleam;
And the sapphire turns to silver
Where the blue-eyed blossoms dream.
I have found a quiet pathway
To the silent hill above,
Where, amid the dew-starred lupine,
I am all alone with Love.



WHEN THE BIRDS FLY SOUTH

WHEN gold and ruby forest leaves are falling,
When opal mists are shrouding hill and plain,
On odorous airs float far, strange voices calling
Our birds of summer to the South again.

In leafless trees are nests, all cold and cheerless—
So warm with life when hours were bright and long!
The fluttering breasts are feathered now and fearless,
The plaining throats have learned to pipe a song.

On every wind-blown woodland hill they gather,
While murmurous wing-songs waft from peak to peak,
Not rapturous tides, but ebbing sweetness, rather,
Prophetic of the far, fair lands they seek.

Against the rose of dawn we see them swinging,
Like dusky clouds dissolving in the blue;
But winds of noon, bereft, go sadly singing
This strain to their lost comrades loved and true:

“Sweet birds, O little minstrels of the bowers,
You filled our blossoming woods, when days were long,
With the beauty of your flight above the flowers,
With the madness and the gladness of your song.

“Now speed you on your voyage lone and airy
In limpid, starry spaces, vast and high!
May weakest wing nor frailest heart grow weary,
Nor lose the way in yonder trackless sky!

"When you 'mid brilliant butterflies go winging
O'er tropic blossoms of your summer strand,
O mingle with the weird and alien singing
The wild, sweet wood-notes of your own Northland!

"When here the welcome April rains are falling,
And mists of living green fold hill and plain,
When every wooing woodland voice is calling,
O birds of passage, homeward turn again!"



THE BIRD SANCTUARY

(Harcroft)

CLOSE by the ways unresting,
Where tides of commerce meet,
Where mortals, fortune-questing,
Pass up and down the street,
There's a cool, green world of wonder
The broad blue heavens under,
Where faintly sounds the thunder
Of traffic's marching feet.

Here winds of Winter surly
Their wild tirades abate;
The Springtide enters early,
And Summer lingers late.
Here Autumn amatory
Puts on his robes of glory
To tell the world-old story
Of love that conquers hate.

Within this Sanctuary—
A safe and blest retreat,
Where all the months are merry
And all the hours are sweet—
When earliest flowers are springing,
From far-off islands winging
With wild, enraptured singing,
A myriad lovers meet.

The bluebirds find awaiting
The nest they knew of yore;
'Twas at their earliest mating
They found its open door.
How soft, how low, how tender,
All in the dawn's gold splendor,
The song of praise they render
For love and home once more!

The robin, glad and fearless,
Sings welcome songs of cheer.
These hills, these vales are peerless,
This terraced lawn is dear.
'Tis a home of heart's desire,
Where joy can never tire
Till sunset's crimson fire
Proclaims that night is near.

The redwing haunts the rushes
By waters still and cool;
His "Okalee" in gushes
Is poured above the pool.
The marsh wren's music bubbles;
He laughs at woes and troubles,
And joys by singing doubles—
'Tis his unfailing rule.

The golden-wings are meeting.
Comes floating down the dell
Their loud and vibrant greeting.
The bobolink's clear bell
Across the wood is ringing,
A thousand echoes bringing
Of full flood-tides of singing,
In days remembered well.

The tanager whose splendor
Was ever a delight;
The veery's love-song tender
At fragrant fall of night;
The grosbeak, rosy-breasted,
The blue-jay, azure-crested,
The oriole, orange-vested,
The sparrow crowned with white;

The warblers, lisping, trilling
Light airs from love-tuned throats;
Elusive white-throats thrilling
The air with liquid notes:
These sing away our sadness.
In wild, ecstatic madness
Of overflowing gladness
Their magic music floats.

By soft winds wooed, the flowers
Unfold their petal wings,
And fill the perfumed hours
With angel whisperings.
A heavenly radiance hovers
About these woodland lovers,
Which only he discovers
Who drinks at sacred springs.

Up in the grey stone mansion
Amid the tree-tops high,
Beneath the broad expansion
Of pure, blue summer sky,
The keepers of these bowers,
In winds and suns and showers
Wield gracious, kingly powers,
While golden years march by.

For they have found the hidden
Deep source of secret joy.
Unwearied and unbidden
They work in love's employ.
Free in God's open spaces,
His sunshine in their faces,
They manifest the graces
Of peace that cannot cloy.



SOLITUDE

HERE on the high hill crest,
In the heart of the ancient wood,
Dreaming my golden dreams,
Oft as a child I stood.
Still is the grass as green,
Still are the rocks as grey,
And the mist still blue in the glen below
As of old ere I went away.

As down on the swaying trees
I look from my airy height,
Sunshine and sky and breeze
Bring back the old delight;
Winds in the waving boughs
Whisper the same old song;
No touch of pain has that sylvan strain,
But harmonies sweet and long.

God of the ancient wood!
Lord of the vale and the hill,
Changeless and great and good,
Quiet my restless will!
Have I Thy name forgot,
Knelt at an alien shrine?
By joy or pain call me home again,
For I would be only Thine.

Heeding the voice of the world,
Oft I have missed Thy tone.
Here in the solitude
Thee would I meet alone.
Speak in the songs of birds,
Speak in the wind's low breath.
In shadow and light, in depth and height,
Let me hear what the Spirit saith.



BLUEBERRY MAGIC

THEY come from the far-off places,
Blue hills and shimmering plains,
With fragrance of wide, wild spaces,
And freshness of summer rains.

They take from the tranquil heavens
Their color so pure and cool
They carry the magic essence
Of flowers by a pine-girt pool

Magic! It lifts and bears me
As light as a thistle-down,
Away from the crowded dwellings
And streets of the busy town.

When I hear the song of the white-throat
And the swish of the firs, wind-tost;
When I glimpse the blueberry acres,
Long ago left and lost,

I know the lamp of Aladdin
Is potent as once of old,
And I gather a harvest of gladness,
As much as my heart can hold.



IF I WERE A BIRDMAN

IF I were a birdman and owned an aeroplane,
I'd fly away to Trinidad and land at Port of Spain;
And there I'd stay for seven weeks—seven and a day—
Before I'd flap my wings again and think to fly away.

I'd wander by Maracas Falls and learn its silver song;
And 'neath the blooming immortelles would linger, dreaming,
long.

I'd feast my eyes on scarlet flowers, orange and rose and blue,
And learn from jewelled humming-birds that fairy tales were
true.

I'd find in many a wayside nook a rest for tired feet,
And sip the milk of cocoanuts and cane-juice, honey-sweet.
I'd fare on fresh pineapples, and rare, delicious things
We never even hear of where wild Boreas sings.

Seven weeks would swiftly pass—seven and a day—
And other isles in other seas would call me far away.
The lilies of Bermuda would see me coming soon
To breathe their fragrant incense beneath the Easter moon.

I'd kneel with them at vespers, and say my morning prayer
Where roses, dew-bright roses, were scenting all the air.
So pure the air, so blue the skies, so clear the singing sea!
And O, the restful quietness would soothe the soul of me!

Seven weeks of summer dream—seven and a day!
And I must fly to Borneo, far and far away.
Alighting on a mountain-top, I'd view the scene below,
And think of all the tragic things that happened long ago.

Once the cruel pagan these savage jungles trod;
Now he honors England's flag and prays to England's God.
In peace he gathers in his fruits, and loves his brother man.
Earth's Golden Age is on the way—deny it here who can!

Wandering in Borneo's forests, deep and wide,
The home of myriad birds and blooms, I may no longer bide.
There's Malta still unvisited, and Cyprus and Ceylon—
And O, a thousand thousand more beneath the circling sun!

Alas! I am no birdman, I own no aeroplane.
I may not fly to Trinidad and land at Port of Spain.
But O, my spirit wings are free—and books will lead the way
To all the isles, for seven weeks—seven and a day!



OUT OF THE BLUE

IT isn't calamities only
That fall like bolts from the blue:
In our life's long, wonderful story
The loveliest things are true.

There are sudden delightful surprises,
Refreshing as summer rain
To dusty and drooping flowers,
That help us to smile again.

Forgetting the cares that vexed us,
The prick of the hidden thorn,
We take up the lightened burdens
With courage and hope reborn.

And such is this flower in my window;
Each bloom in the dusk glows bright,
Like a fluttering rose-winged fairy,
Poising for sudden flight.

I am gladdened by each sweet blossom
A-tilt on its rosy stem.
(The giver chose to be nameless,
But I know it was one of *Them*.)

Flowers have thus strewn my pathway
Over and over again;
And here in the soft blue twilight
The meaning to me grows plain.

Just over the mystic border—
Nearer, perhaps, than we guess—
There are winged ones who watch our pathway,
Delighting to cheer and bless.

Hearts that are human and loving,
Hands that are tender and true,
They employ whenever they send us
Blessings out of the blue.

Who knows but my own Heart's Dearest
Leaned down from the bowers above
With whisper of benediction
To bring me this gift of love?

O, it isn't calamity only
That falls with a swift surprise;
There may drop from the hands of the Winged Ones
Blossoms of Paradise.



THINE ALONE THE GLORY

ONCE more, O Heavenly Father,
To Thee our hearts we raise
In prayers of adoration
And hymns of grateful praise.
With tokens of Thy goodness
The fruitful year is crowned.
Our footsteps, angel-guarded,
In paths of peace are found.
Thine alone the glory!
O hear us while we sing!
We Thee adore for evermore,
Our gracious Lord and King!

We sowed our seed in springtime;
Thou gavest rich increase.
Till golden sheaves were garnered
Thy mercies did not cease.
Our eyes were blessed with beauty,
Our hearts were cheered with song,
And sleep and stillness followed
Each day, however long.

Thine alone the glory!
O hear us while we sing!
We Thee adore for evermore,
Our gracious Lord and King!

Thou, Lord, hast been our refuge;
Thine everlasting arm
In tempest and in sunshine
Has shielded us from harm.
We thank Thee for Thy bounties
That round our pathway fall,
But O, for life eternal
We bless Thee more than all.

Thine alone the glory!
O hear us while we sing!
We Thee adore for evermore,
Our gracious Lord and King!



AUTUMN DREAM

I KNOW where the oaks and maples
Are setting the hills ablaze,
And the elms and the amber beeches
Are gilding the woodland ways.
I know where the scarlet sumachs
Are holding their torches high,
And the soft, blue smoke of the asters
Floats up to the rim of sky.

I know where the ripe nuts cluster—
Brown twins in a burly husk—
On the ridge where the crested bluejay
Wings home in the frosty dusk;
Where the killdeer calls in the starlight
His plaintive and weird good-night,
And the silence is stirred by wing-beats
Of geese on their southward flight.

I know where a forest pathway
Winds on to the rim of the world,
Where smoke-wreaths hang in the twilight,
Like banners of love unfurled,
O'er an old grey house in the valley.
O see, in the autumn gloam,
Like beacons lit for a welcome,
The beckoning lights of home.



PIPS OF PAN

THE autumn light falls softly bright
Upon the forest and the meadow;
Our garners hold the harvest gold,
And fruits that blushed in sun and shadow.
The sun-bronzed laboring man,
Goaded no more from sun to sun
By duties clamoring to be done,
May list the pipes of Pan.

He stays his feet where new-sown wheat
Lies sleeping in the warm, brown furrow.
With plenteous yields from all his fields,
He knows no dread of any morrow.

With hands and heart at ease
He stands and listens to the sound
Of sere leaves rustling to the ground,
And bird-calls on the breeze.

The warbler's wing—so slight a thing!—
Has passed where only thought may follow;
The mocking-bird, so lately heard,
Is gone with robin, wren and swallow;
And piping plaintively,
A lone song-sparrow tells his mate,
“O let us, love, no longer wait.
Fly, fly away with me!”

The jocund jay keeps holiday;
For him no distant islands beckon.
Luxurious ease by tropic seas
As heart's desire he scorns to reckon.

The finches linger late;
Nuthatch and woodpecker explore
Their secret source of hidden store
For stormy days that wait.

The blackbirds sing upon the wing
A song with little music in it;
But songs are few to-day, and so
Who sings for love will surely win it.

But hark! there in the tree,
So soft, so dear a voice is heard;
A cheery-hearted, friendly bird
Calls 'Chickadee-dee-dee!'

Play, pipes of Pan, while play ye can,
A madrigal to vanished summer;
For winter drear will soon be here,
And spring is but a tardy comer.

To him who listening stands
Your music is a prophecy
Of joys that have been and shall be
Abroad through all the lands.



THE WIND

O MIGHTY wind, from far-off regions blowing!
Who shall interpret your wild, lyric mirth?
Or who confine your shoreless currents flowing
For ever round the earth?

With rush and roar you come, or softly stealing,
Laden with fragrant balm from unknown springs.
Purity you bring, vigor and health and healing—
Or death—upon your wings.

We hear your deep-toned cadence rising, falling,
Throughout the watches of the solemn night,
And dream that voices long, long loved are calling
From ways serene and bright.

Hearths that gave back your music and your madness,
Lips that with laughter met your wild caress,
Strong ones that all your bluster braved with gladness,
Yet loved your tenderness.

Where are they now? Upon what shores or islands
Flutter in breezy morns their garment's hem?
You have no answer! To those starry highlands
You might not follow them.

To-day we may not round the world go roaming,
Wild wind, with you, buoyant and free and light;
But some still, golden eve we shall go homing
Beyond your utmost flight.

For, wonderful as are the winds and waters,
And all the mighty forces Nature knows,
In human souls alone, God's sons and daughters,
His living spirit flows.



HONEY

OVER the glimmering fields and woods to-night
The drifts lie deep.
The flowers that made their pathways a delight
Are fast asleep;
And bees that murmured music in their bloom,
Drowsy and still, are shrouded now in gloom.

The bobolink that rang his rippling bell
Above the grass,
The bluebird and the robin, loved so well,
We saw them pass.
They left the bowers all desolate and cold,
When summer verdure turned to autumn gold.

But oh, what sweets the blossoms yielded up
Before they slept!
In many a delicate and dainty cup
Securely kept,
Ambrosia fit for angels' food is ours,
Compound quintessences of fragrant flowers.

Pale amber dews of vanished loveliness
We taste, and lo!
Fades from the land its cold and glittering dress
Of drifted snow.
Where perfumes blend and myriad murmurs throng,
We wander in a summerland of song.



"ROSES IN DECEMBER"

SHALL roses blossom in December
When all the paths are hushed with snow
And over woodland, field and garden
The stinging winds of winter blow?

No more the green leaves wave and whisper;
Withered and fallen low they lie,
While white, cloud-woven palls of silence
Are dropping softly from the sky.

The birds are gone, the streams are muted;
No more the elfin bugles blow;
No balmy fragrances are wafted
Across the vales of twilight, now.

Yet there are roses in December,
And violets and daffodils.
They blossom in a magic garden,
And he may enter in who wills.

Here you may find by river margins
The willow catkins, silver-pale;
The rare arbutus, sea-shell tinted,
The chaste white lily of the dale.

Light leaves a-dance in golden sunshine;
Dark firs that toss against the blue;
A cool, clear spring in sylvan shadow,
A bank of violets drenched in dew;

The robins' ringing jubilate,
The evensong of hermit thrush;
The lap of waves on quiet beaches,
Or lisp of leaves in midnight's hush;

Deep dells in sunset opalescent;
Tinkle of bells at pasture bars;
A quiet lake by moonlight silvered;
A golden galaxy of stars;

The breathing beauty of a garden
Where daisies star the dewy dusk,
And warm, caressing winds come laden
With perfumes of the rose and musk;

The deep, sweet joy of faithful friendship,
A loving word, a tender tone;
The ecstasy of soul-communion
With Nature and with God alone.

Such are the roses of December
That burst in bloom at Christmas-tide;
They are but memories we cherish,
And love, the key that opens wide

The dream-gate of the magic garden,
Where all our dearest, loveliest hours
In tender, unforgotten glory,
Spring into life and bloom like flowers.



SNOW

I KNOW a hill whereon the drifted snow
In undulating waves lies white and deep.
Only the feet of moonbeams come and go,
And blue cloud shadows, moving soft and slow
Across the fields of silence and of sleep.

From hour to hour no voice is heard, no sound
But whispering snows and winds in monotone,
Blowing from glistening hills that circle round,
And shadowy vales of solitude profound,
And ancient, dreaming forests vast and lone.

But blest companionship, most high, most sweet,
The contemplative spirit here may know,
Exalted friendship, infinite, complete,
Transcending all the commerce of the street,
Its garish glitter and unresting show.

For God is in His world of white and blue;
His are the timeless glories of the hills.
All loveliness is here sublimely true,
Purity, goodness, manifest to view,
For all the shimmering vast His spirit fills.



THE KINDLY YEARS

THE kindly years have come and gone,
And blessed us as they passed,
And at our feet, with lavish love,
Their countless treasures cast.

Tempest and sunshine, stars and dew,
The wild winds and the rain,
Perchance have found us sad at heart
But brought us joy again.

The rose of love has never failed,
However deep the snow;
And still amid the summer heat
The springs of gladness flow.

However bountiful the past,
The best is yet to come—
The loveliest and the last new year,
The year that brings us Home.

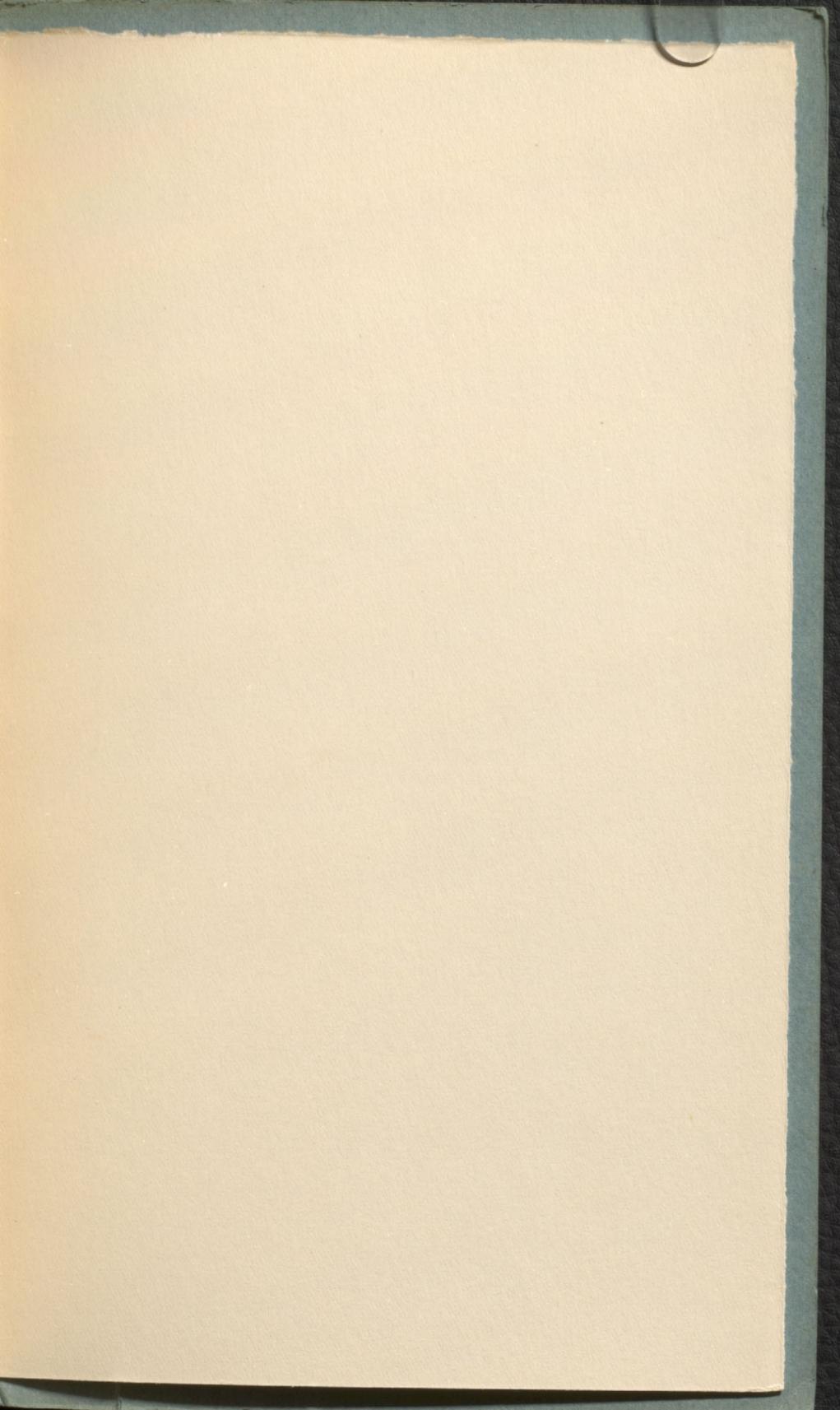
ALL IS WELL

WHEN I have passed death's portal,
Wear no black robes for me,
Nor seek the shadowed pathways
In lone despondency.
Shall not my soul, immortal,
Be clothed in light and joy?
Shall not my feet upon the hills
Be swift in Love's employ?

Weep if you will, a little,
O dearest friends and best,
When my pale hands are folded
Upon my pulseless breast.
Weep if you will, a little,
But oh, not over long!
There's healing balm in sunshine,
There's solace in a song.

Wear no black robes in token
When I have passed above,
For color, fragrance, beauty,
Are sign and seal of love.
When the silver cord is broken,
The spirit, winged and free,
In garments from the looms of joy
Is clothed eternally.

Deem not that death can sever
The loving links we bind;
Nor dream earth's broken music
Is lost upon the wind.
Forever and forever—
Uncounted voices tell—
Forever and forevermore,
Love lives, and all is well.



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